CLAIMS

We claim:

1. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of the spiramycin biosynthesis pathway, said polynucleotide is:
~~(a)~~ selected from the group consisting of (a) SEQ ID NOS: 111 and 141, ~~or~~ and
(b) ~~selected from the group consisting of~~ sequences of (a) ~~derived from the sequences 111 or 141 that encode the same polypeptides as encoded by one of the sequences 111 or 141 but~~ that differ from these sequences due to the degeneracy of the genetic code.

2-4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously presented) The polynucleotide as claimed in 1, which encodes a protein involved in the biosynthesis of a macrolide.

6-12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently amended) A recombinant DNA, which comprises SEQ ID NO: 111 or one of the sequences that differ from SEQ ID NO: 111 due to the degeneracy of the genetic code ~~at least one polynucleotide as claimed in claim 1~~.

14. (Previously presented) A vector comprising the recombinant DNA as claimed in claim 13.

15. (Currently amended) The recombinant DNA as claimed in claim 14, wherein said vector is chosen from bacteriophages, plasmids, phagemids, integrative vectors, fosmids, cosmids, shuttle vectors, BACs (Bacterial Artificial Chromosomes) and PACs (vectors created from the bacterial P1 plasmid).

16. (Previously presented) The recombinant DNA as claimed in claim 15, which is selected from the group consisting of pSPM36, pSPM58, pSPM74, pSPM75 and pSPM107.

17-20. (Canceled)

21. (Currently amended) A recombinant host cell into which at least one polynucleotide ~~and/or at least one recombinant DNA and/or at least one expression vector~~ as claimed in ~~one of claims~~ claim1 ~~or 14~~ has been introduced.

22-66. (Canceled)

67. (Currently amended) An isolated polynucleotide which is a full complement ~~polynucleotide complementary~~ to one of the polynucleotides as claimed in claim 1.

68-71. (Canceled)

72. (Currently amended) A strain of ~~Streptomyces ambofaciens~~ *Streptomyces ambofaciens*, which is the strain OSC2/pSPM75(1) or the strain OSC2/pSPM75(2) deposited with the Collection Nationale de Cultures de Microorganismes under the accession number CNCM I-3101.

73. (Previously presented) A recombinant DNA which comprises:
- a polynucleotide which can be obtained by polymerase chain reaction using the following pair of sequence primers:
5' AAGCTTGTGTGCCCGGTGTA.CCTGGGGGAGC 3' (SEQ ID NO: 138) and
5' GGATCCCGCGACGGACACGACCGCCGCGCA 3' (SEQ ID NO: 139) and, as matrix, the cosmid pSPM36 or the total DNA of *Streptomyces ambofaciens*.

74. (Previously presented) A vector comprising the recombinant DNA as claimed in claim 73.

75. (Previously presented) The vector as claimed in claim 74, which is an expression vector.

76. (Previously presented) A recombinant host cell into which at least one recombinant DNA or vector as claimed in one of claims 73, 74, or 75 has been introduced.

77. (Currently amended) A method of producing a polypeptide, wherein said method comprises the following steps:

a) transforming a host cell with ~~at least one~~ the expression vector as claimed in claim 75;

b) cultivating, in a suitable culture medium, said host cell;

c) recovering the conditioned culture medium or a cell extract; and

d) separating and purifying said polypeptide from said culture medium or from the cell extract obtained in step c)~~; and~~

~~e) where appropriate, characterizing the recombinant polypeptide produced~~.

78-93. (Canceled)

94. (New) The method of claim 77 further comprising characterizing the recombinant polypeptide produced.

95. (New) A recombinant host cell into which at least one vector as claimed in claim 14 has been introduced.

96. (New) A recombinant DNA, which comprises SEQ ID NO: 141 or one of the sequences that differ from SEQ ID NO: 141 due to the degeneracy of the genetic code.

97. (New) A vector comprising the recombinant DNA as claimed in claim 96.

98. (New) A recombinant host cell into which at least one vector as claimed in claim 97 has been introduced.